



Archpriest Thomas Soroka, *Rector*
Deacon Luke Loboda, *Attached*

Cheesefare Saturday/Forgiveness Sunday

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org March 13-14, 2021

Announcements

➤ **Great Lent begins tomorrow. The Lenten Schedule is now available at the candle desk.** Please post it in a prominent place to make every effort to attend the Divine Services during Great Lent. We will not be curtailing services, we will actually be increasing the number of services we normally offer, since we will have all four Memorial Saturday Liturgies. May God bless your faithfulness as we approach the Lenten season.

➤ **This Saturday, March 20, beginning after the Divine Liturgy** (approximately 11:30 am) we will be working on several projects for which we are **asking able bodied people to help.** First, we will be reconfiguring the side rooms of the altar to accommodate the need for more space (asking men to help with the moving heavy furniture and installation of cabinets). Also, we will be cleaning the large chandelier. Please help us if you can.

➤ **Donations are now being sought** for the completed iconography in the Children's ("cry") Room. Please refer to the insert in today's bulletin to see suggested donations if you are able to support this incredible gift to our children. Fr Theodore will complete the drawings in the Candle Kiosk Room, God willing, later this year.

DATES TO NOTE

Orthodox Great Lent Begins Monday, March 15
Western Easter is on Sunday, April 4
Orthodox Pascha is on Sunday, May 2

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** *Known to be hospitalized:* (none) *Home:* George Shaytar, Sandi Tirpak, Paul Yewisiak. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Garnette Kerchum, Eleanor Kovacs, Natalie Popovich, Olga Tryszyn.

➤ **Vigil Lights** From the **John Mahalchak family** for the health of friends and family, especially Cheryl, John, Gregory, Mary, Daniel, Kevin, Steven, Kayla Elizabeth, and Theresa. From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elaine Hamilton and Elizabeth Hamilton. From **Charles Wasilko** for the departed servants Uncle Mike Wasilko, cousin Michael Wasilko, and Michelle Bittner. From **John Kowalcheck and Olga Cozza** for the health of Xenia (Nora) Kowalcheck and the child to be born of her; for the health of Galina Vilкова, Elena Kondratenko, and Elena Mayorova. From **John Kowalcheck** for the health of Olga Cozza on her birthday. From **Mat Nancy and Gregory Mell** for the departed servants Dn Joseph Mell and Michelle Bittner (1 year) and for the health of family. From **Doris Wasilko** for the departed servant cousin Michael Wasilko and Michelle Bittler; for the health of the Wasilko and Dyczko families. From **Marsha Wasilko** for the departed servants Michelle Bittner and cousin Michael Wasilko.

Thank You

➤ to **John and Deb Burgess** for sponsoring these categories of monthly donations for March: (Bulletin \$60, Holy Bread \$50, Communion Wine \$40, Altar Candles \$25) and to the **John Mahalchak family** (Incense \$10) for the health of friends and family.

This Week in Church School

Today's lesson: Elijah

Scripture reference: I/III Kings 17-22, II/IV Kings 1-2

Questions to ask/review:

- Who was Elijah? What is a prophet?
- How did the Jewish people become separated around 900 BC?
- Did Elijah live in the North or South?
- What are the differences between a prophet of God and a prophet of Baal?
- Why did Elijah go to speak to King Ahab?
- Would you have been willing to go to the king if you had been in Elijah's place? Why or why not?
- Have you ever had to stand up for what you believe in? What happened?
- What 2 miracles occurred in Zarephath?
- What was God's curse on Israel?
- Why did Elijah destroy all the prophets of Baal after he won the challenge?
- Why did Elijah run from Jezebel? Was he cowardly? Why or why not?
- When Elijah was in the wilderness, why did he want to die? What made him willing to return and face Ahaziah, Ahab's successor?

Suggested Activities at home:

Using a study Bible, locate the events of Elijah's life on a map.

Prayer: Lord, give us the strength to stand for your Truth. Amen.



St Nicholas Church will strive to glorify God through Orthodox Christian worship, sincere love and care for one another, and service to those in need around us.

Welcome!

Whether you are searching for a new church home or just visiting, we are glad you're with us today. If you have a prayer request, are looking for more information about the Orthodox Faith, would like to join our parish, or would like to speak with Fr Thomas, we invite you to fill out a visitor's card and drop it in the offering basket as your offering today. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

This Week's Schedule

Saturday, March 13

10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church School
5:00 pm Great Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, March 14

10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church School
Blini Luncheon following
7:00 pm Forgiveness Vespers

Monday, March 15 (Clean Monday)

7:00 pm Canon of St Andrew of Crete

Tuesday, March 16

9:00 am Lenten Matins
9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours
7:00 pm Canon of St Andrew of Crete

Wednesday, March 17

6:00 pm Presanctified Liturgy
Fellowship meal following

Thursday, March 18

9:00 am Lenten Matins
9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours
7:00 pm Canon of St Andrew of Crete

Friday, March 19

7:00 pm Akathist

Saturday, March 20

10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church School
5:00 pm Great Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, March 21 (Sunday of Orthodoxy)

10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church School
Icon Procession with Children

Hymns and Readings for Saturday, Mar 13

Tone 4 Troparion (from the *Lenten Triodion*)

O God of our Fathers,
always act with kindness towards us:
take not Thy mercy from us,
but guide our lives in peace,//
through the prayers of Thy saints!

Tone 8 Kontakion (from the *Lenten Triodion*)

Thou hast glorified the company of God-bearing
fathers who enlighten the world
as preachers of godliness and silencers of
impiety.
At their prayers, keep all who praise and
magnify Thee, in perfect peace,//
that they may sing to Thee: “Alleluia!”

Tone 7 Prokeimenon (from the *Lenten Triodion*)

Let the saints exult in glory, / let them sing for
joy on their couches! (*Ps. 149:5*)

Epistle of the Saturday (Rom 14:19-23, 16:25-27)

Therefore let us pursue the things which make
for peace and the things by which one may edify
another. Do not destroy the work of God for the
sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is
evil for the man who eats with offense. It is
good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do
anything by which your brother stumbles or is
offended or is made weak. Do you have faith?
Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who
does not condemn himself in what he approves.
But he who doubts is condemned if he eats,
because he does not eat from faith; for whatever
is not from faith is sin.

Now to Him who is able to establish you
according to my gospel and the preaching of
Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the
mystery kept secret since the world began but
now made manifest, and by the prophetic
Scriptures made known to all nations, according
to the commandment of the everlasting God, for

obedience to the faith— to God, alone wise, be
glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

Gospel of the Saturday (Matthew 6:1-13)

And He said: “Take heed that you do not do your
charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them.
Otherwise you have no reward from your Father
in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable
deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the
hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the
streets, that they may have glory from men.
Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.
But when you do a charitable deed, do not let
your left hand know what your right hand is
doing, that your charitable deed may be in
secret; and your Father who sees in secret will
Himself reward you openly.

“And when you pray, you shall not be like the
hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the
synagogues and on the corners of the streets,
that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say
to you, they have their reward. But you, when
you pray, go into your room, and when you have
shut your door, pray to your Father who is in
the secret place; and your Father who sees in
secret will reward you openly. And when you
pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen
do. For they think that they will be heard for
their many words.

“Therefore do not be like them. For your Father
knows the things you have need of before you
ask Him. In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.

And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the
glory forever. Amen..

Communion Hymn for the Monastics

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise
befits the just. (*Ps. 32:1*) Alleluia, Alleluia,
Alleluia!

Cheesefare Saturday

Having led us gently through the preceding
Feasts, the God-bearing Fathers have prepared
us for the arena of the Fast and led us away
from luxury and satiety. They have instructed us
with fear of the future Judgment, and have
skillfully cleansed us by anticipation during
Cheesefare week, having placed two fast days in
the middle of the preceding week, in order
gradually to rouse us to fasting. Behold, they
now set in our midst those who lived lives of
sanctity, through their many labors and toils,
both men and women, so that, by reminding us
of their struggles, they might make us more
vigorous for the contest, and so that, having
their lives as an example and guide, and
eliciting their alliance and aid, we might disrobe
for spiritual exertions, taking it into account
that they shared in the same nature as
ourselves. For, just as generals, when their
armies are arrayed and are already standing in
line, stir up their own troops by recounting
examples and memories of men of old who
fought with distinction and valor, and the
troops, stimulated thereby with the hope of
victory, set out wholeheartedly for combat, so
also do the God-bearing Fathers wisely act in
our case. Encouraging both men and women to
spiritual contests through the example of those
who have lived in holiness, in this way they
bring them to the arena of the Fast, in order
that, looking to their lives as an excellent
prototype, we might attain to the many different
kinds of virtue, as each of us is able: first, love,

and then conscious abstinence from unseemly
works and deeds, and fasting itself, that is, not
just from food, but also from the sins of the
tongue, anger, sins of the eyes, and, to put it
simply, refraining from all that is evil. For this
reason, the Holy Fathers appointed the present
commemoration of all the Ascetic Saints,
adducing those who were well-pleasing to God
for fasting and other good works, urging us to
proceed, in their image, to the arena of the
virtues, and exhorting us to arm ourselves
valiantly against the passions and the demons,
reckoning that if we show zeal equal to theirs,
there is no impediment to our achieving all that
they achieved and being vouchsafed the same
rewards; for, they shared in the same nature as
ourselves.

Concerning Cheesefare week, when it was
previously permitted to eat meat, some say that
Emperor Heraklios decreed its present form.
After campaigning against Chosroës and the
Persians for six years, he vowed to God that, if
he prevailed against them, he would alter this
week and make it intermediate between fasting
and feasting, which he did. In my opinion,
although this may have been the case, the Holy
Fathers devised this week as kind of preparatory
cleansing, lest we should become disgruntled at
being led straight from consuming meat and
overeating to extreme abstinence from food and
damage our physical health, and so that, by
abstaining gently and gradually from rich and
delectable foods, we might, like recalcitrant
horses, through a reduced intake of food, accept
the bridle of fasting. That which they devised
for the soul through parables, they also did for
the body, little by little removing impediments
to fasting.

By the intercessions of all Thine Ascetic Saints,
O Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.



Hymns and Readings for Sunday, March 14

Tone 7 Troparion (Resurrection)

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death.
To the thief Thou didst open Paradise.
For the Myrrhbearers Thou didst change
weeping into joy,
and Thou didst command Thy disciples, O Christ
God,
to proclaim that Thou art risen,//
granting the world great mercy.

Tone 4 Troparion of St Nicholas

You appeared to your flock as a rule of faith,
an image of humility, and a teacher of
abstinence.
Because of your lowliness heaven was opened to
you!
Because of your poverty riches were granted to
you!
O holy Bishop Nicholas,
pray to Christ our God to save our souls.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Tone 3 Kontakion of St Nicholas

You appeared as a priest in Myra, O Saint
Nicholas,
Fulfilling the gospel of Christ, O ven'rable one;
You laid down your life for your people
And rescued the innocent from death.
Therefore you have been blest as a great init'ate
of the grace of God.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 6 Kontakion (from the Lenten Triodion)

O Master, Teacher of wisdom,
Bestower of virtue,
Who teachest the thoughtless and protectest the
poor,
strengthen and enlighten my heart!
O Word of the Father,

let me not restrain my mouth from crying to
Thee:
“Have mercy on me, a transgressor,//
O merciful Lord!”

Tone 8 Prokeimenon from the Triodion

Pray and make your vows before the Lord, our
God! (Ps. 75:10a)

Epistle of the Sunday (Romans 13:11-14:4)

And do this, knowing the time, that now it is
high time to awake out of sleep; for now our
salvation is nearer than when we first believed.
The night is far spent, the day is at hand.
Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness,
and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk
properly, as in the day, not in revelry and
drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in
strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its
lusts.

Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to
disputes over doubtful things. For one believes
he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats
only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise
him who does not eat, and let not him who does
not eat judge him who eats; for God has
received him. Who are you to judge another's
servant? To his own master he stands or falls.
Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able
to make him stand.

Gospel of the Sunday (Matthew 6:14-21)

“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your
heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you
do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will
your Father forgive your trespasses.

“Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the
hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they
disfigure their faces that they may appear to

men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they
have their reward. But you, when you fast,
anoint your head and wash your face, so that
you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to
your Father who is in the secret place; and your
Father who sees in secret will reward you
openly.

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth,
where moth and rust destroy and where thieves
break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves
treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor
rust destroys and where thieves do not break in
and steal. For where your treasure is, there your
heart will be also.

The Fall of Adam

On this day we commemorate the fall of Adam the
first-created from partaking of the fruit of Paradise,
which our holy and divine Fathers have appointed for
the Sunday before Great Lent in order to demonstrate
the great healing effect of the fast upon human nature
and the great harm of intemperance and
disobedience. Setting aside the countless instances of
these vices in the world, the Fathers have put forth a
vivid example in first-created Adam, who suffered
great harm in his total failure to fast and brought this
harm upon our nature. He did not keep the first
commandment of a beneficial fast which God had
required of mankind, but yielding to the desires of his
belly and of the serpent through Eve, he not only did
not become godlike, but he gave rise to death,
bringing perdition upon all our race. For the sake of
Adam's intemperance the Lord fasted for forty days
and was obedient. It was for this reason that the holy
Apostles conceived this present forty-day fast, so that
as Adam forfeited incorruption through his
intemperance, we may regain it through abstinence.
Also, as was stated earlier, it was the intent of the
Holy Fathers through the Triodion to relate in a
condensed form all of God's acts from the beginning
to the end of the world. Since Adam's transgression
and fall through the eating of the fruit of the tree is
the principal cause of the state of mankind, the
Fathers exhort us who are observing this
commemoration to avoid Adam's sin and to shun
intemperance in all things.

Now it was on the sixth day that Adam was created by
the hand of God after His own image and through His
life-giving breath. Receiving God's commandment, he
lived in Paradise up until the sixth hour, when he
disobeyed God's command and was driven out. And as
he stretched out his hand at the sixth hour to touch
the fruit, so the new Adam, Christ, at the sixth day
and hour stretched out his hands upon the Cross,
annulling the sentence of perdition brought about by
the former Adam. For he was created in the midst of
corruption and incorruption through providence with
the freedom of choice. God could have made Adam
sinless, yet His providence was to provide for
reparation. For this cause He gave His commandment
that Adam might partake of all in the garden, save the
one tree. Does this not mean that Adam was meant to
understand the essence of all created by the divine
power, but was not to attempt to understand the
essence of the Godhead; That is to say God
commanded Adam to concern himself will all other
elements and qualities, reasoning with his mind to
the glory of God; for this is true nourishment. But he
was not to search for the divine essence: God, who He
is, where He is and how He brought all things into
being out of nothingness. Yet to his own harm Adam,
having no care for the other things, sought to
examine God and to determine His essence; and since
he was not perfect but still a simple child, he failed in
his undertaking, when through Eve Satan planted in
him the desire of becoming Godlike.

Some say that the tree of disobedience was a fig tree,
and becoming aware of their nakedness, Adam and
Eve used its leaves to cover themselves. For this
reason Christ cursed the fig tree as the cause of that
disobedience, attributing to it a sort of resemblance
to sin. For having transgressed becoming clothed in
mortal flesh and receiving the curse, Adam was
driven from Paradise. And at God's command a
flaming sword guarded its gates. Adam sat before the
gates of Paradise and lamented the many blessings he
had lost in his failure to observe a timely fast. And
through him the entire race shared in that sentence,
until our Creator, taking pity on our nature which
because of Satan was perishing, was born of the Holy
Virgin and lived an exceptional life, showing us the
path away from the devil, that is abstinence and
humility, and valiantly gaining the victory over the
deceiver, returned us to our former state.